

Some have seized the reauthorization of SCHIP as a license to raise taxes, increase spending, and take a giant leap forward into the land of government-run health care.

The problems with this bill are numerous, and I have spelled them out on this floor before. Because of a budgeting gimmick, the current bill, H.R. 976, will end up costing \$41 billion more than advertised.

It will raise taxes at a time when the American people are already taxed too much by more than doubling the Federal tax on tobacco.

It will leave open loopholes allowing some States to raid their kids' health funds and use the money for adults. The "C" in "SCHIP" stands for children.

It will allow families in certain States who make as much as four times the Federal poverty level to still qualify for SCHIP insurance. A family of four in New York City making as much as \$82,600 could qualify.

That means thousands of families in New York alone will be poor enough to receive SCHIP—yet also rich enough to pay the alternative minimum tax, a tax designed specifically to target the so-called "wealthy."

By luring people away from the private market, H.R. 976 will eventually remove 2 million people from private health coverage.

Senators LOTT, KYL, GREGG, BUNNING and I saw the problems with this bill, and proposed an alternative. The Kids First Act would have reauthorized SCHIP and ensured that states had sufficient resources to cover all of the kids already enrolled.

It would have added an additional 1.3 million children to the program by 2012. And it would have done all of this without raising taxes or increasing the deficit.

The Kids First Act kept the focus on SCHIP's true goal: protecting low-income children.

Many States, including Kentucky, would actually have had more SCHIP funds to spend on kids under the Kids First Act than under the bill on the floor. I am sorry the Senate did not see fit to adopt our proposal.

I know many Senators worked their hardest during this debate to craft comprehensive solutions for the uninsured in America. I appreciate their efforts. I look forward to continuing that work.

Unfortunately, so much effort has not produced an answer. This bill is unlikely to receive a Presidential signature. Nothing will have been accomplished. We will have to pass a temporary extension of SCHIP, and then go back to the drawing board for a long-term reauthorization.

When we do, I hope the Senate can stay focused like a laser beam on what SCHIP is truly all about: providing a safety net for kids in low-income families.

I look forward to working with all of my colleagues to craft legislation that

can meet that goal, pass this Senate, and be signed into law.

But for now, the bill on the floor will not accomplish that. I intend to vote "no." And I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, we are about to vote final passage tonight. I am not going to take the time of Senators for all the customary thank-yous. I will do that at a later date. But I do very much want to thank Senators GRASSLEY, HATCH, and ROCKEFELLER and all the great team who helped make this possible.

I also thank the parents across the country who love their children and are determined to provide the best possible health care for them. I say to the parents, to all Americans, I hope this bill helps you provide that health care, and I think it will. I thank all Senators for their cooperation in helping make this happen tonight.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the substitute amendment, No. 3520, as amended, is agreed to.

The question is on the engrossment of the amendment and third reading of the bill.

The amendment was ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to be read a third time.

The bill was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass?

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHN-SON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 68, nays 31, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 307 Leg.]

YEAS—68

Akaka	Feingold	Nelson (FL)
Alexander	Feinstein	Nelson (NE)
Baucus	Grassley	Obama
Bayh	Harkin	Pryor
Biden	Hatch	Reed
Bingaman	Hutchison	Reid
Bond	Inouye	Roberts
Boxer	Kennedy	Rockefeller
Brown	Kerry	Salazar
Byrd	Klobuchar	Sanders
Cantwell	Kohl	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Smith
Carper	Lautenberg	Snowe
Casey	Leahy	Specter
Clinton	Levin	Stabenow
Coleman	Lieberman	Stevens
Collins	Lincoln	Sununu
Conrad	Lugar	Tester
Corker	McCaskill	Warner
Dodd	Menendez	Webb
Domenici	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Dorgan	Murkowski	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	

NAYS—31

Allard	Brownback	Chambliss
Barrasso	Bunning	Coburn
Bennett	Burr	Cochran

Cornyn
Craig
Crapo
DeMint
Dole
Ensign
Enzi
Graham

Gregg
Hagel
Inhofe
Isakson
Kyl
Lott
Martinez
McCain

McConnell
Sessions
Shelby
Thune
Vitter
Voinovich

NOT VOTING—1

Johnson

The bill (H.R. 976), as amended, was passed.

The bill will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote.

Mr. BAUCUS. I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2646

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the title amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid on the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2646) was agreed to, as follows:

Amend the title to read:

A bill to amend title XXI of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program, and for other purposes.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the vote on the judicial nomination of the judge from Oklahoma be modified for the vote to occur immediately after the Senate convenes tomorrow morning, Friday, under the same conditions provided under the previous order.

I would say this has been cleared with Senator LEAHY and Senate SPECTER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMERICA COMPETES ACT—
CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2272, the 21st Century Competitiveness Act of 2007; that the conference report be adopted, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, that any statements be printed in the RECORD as if given.

Mr. President, I hope we can, in a minute or two, clear this wonderful piece of legislation. It is something I think people will write about for a long time. It is going to improve America's stature in the world and allow us to be more competitive.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and I will not object, I want to take a brief opportunity to thank the senior Senator